

Blissful
Marriage
A Practical Islamic Guide

Blissful Marriage

A Practical Islamic Guide

[NEW EDITION]

Drs. Ekram and M. Rida Beshir

amana publications

E-mail: ig@ipublishing.com
Website: www.ipublishing.com

First Edition

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Second Edition

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our daughter Hoda for the endless hours she spent in front of the computer and the tireless dedication she showed in editing this book, and the gracious patience that she conducted herself with through the entire experience. May Allah keep her always patient and dedicated to the Islamic way of life and reward her with the best rewards.

We also like to express our sincere thanks to our son-in-law Mohamed Haroun for his help in writing the Arabic text of the chapters of the prophet SAW and helping in verifying the sources of these chapters.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to all our children, Amr, Hoda, Noha, and Sumayyah, for all their help with this book. We recognize that the time spent writing this book was precious time that we could have spent with our children; however, because of our children's maturity, they were encouraged in to embark on this project for the benefit of Muslims everywhere. May Allah reward them and all the good-hearted Muslim boys and girls who struggle in the path of truth.

Dr. Ekram and M. Rida Beshr

Printed in the United States of America by International Graphics
10710 Tucker Street Beltsville, Maryland 20705-2224 USA
Tel: (301) 595-5999 Fax: (301) 595-5384

E-mail: ig@igprinting.com
Website: www.igprinting.com

Contents

Preface	xii
Introduction	1
1. Family Crises in North America and Their Impact on Muslim Families	10
Introduction	10
Shocking Facts	13
Canadian Statistics	13
United States Statistics	19
Impact on Muslim Families	22
What To Do: A Word of Advice	22
2. Main Objectives of Marriage	24
Introduction	24
Stronger Faith	25
Examples From the <i>Seerah</i> :	
Abu Addahdah and Um Addahdah	28
The Evening Visitor	30
Other Objectives of Marriage	32
Realizing and Fulfilling the <i>Sunnah</i> of Creation (Pairing)	32
Procreation	32
<i>Ihssun</i>	33
Fulfilling and Satisfying the Parenthood Instinct in Human Beings	33
Progress and Advancement of Human Race	33
Stronger Society	33
Proper Distribution of Tasks & Responsibilities	34
3. The Process of Selection	35
Introduction	34
<i>Qur'anic</i> Advice Regarding Process of Selection	36
The Prophet's Advice	37
The North American Situation	42
How Parents and Community Can Help	43

Matching Questionnaires	45
Male Matching Questionnaire	47
Female Matching Questionnaire	58
How to Make Best Use of This Questionnaire	73
Final Word Concerning Questionnaires	74
Marriage From the People of the Book	75
The Condition Stated in the Verse	75
The Practice of the Early Muslims	76
Muslims in North America are a Minority	76
The Reality of the North American Condition	77
The Impact on Muslim Women	77
A Word of Caution	77

4. Tried and Proven Recipes for a Successful Marriage 79

Introduction	79
Ingredients	79
The Seven Essential 'C's	80
Commitment	80
Courtesy	82
Communication	83
Care	86
Contentment	87
Contribution	91
Compromise	92
The Seven Magical 'S's	94
Sensitivity	94
Sincerity	97
Security	97
Support	99
Satisfaction	100
Sharing	102
Sexual Gratification	103
The Five Wonderful 'A's	112
Adaptation	112
Accommodation	113
Appreciation	113
Anticipation	116
Acceptance	117

Other Ingredients and Qualities	118
<i>Rahmah</i> (meaning compassion, leniency, and kindness)	118
Love	121
Forgiveness	126
Trust and Faithfulness	130
Open Mindedness and Understanding	132
Respect	133
Patience	135
Tested and Proven Recipes for Various Occasions	141
Vacation Recipe	141
Visiting In-Laws Recipe	142
During Pregnancy and Delivery Time	142
During Conflicts	143
During Overseas Travel to Visit Family	143
During Exams and Study Periods	144
During Shopping Trips	144

5. Family Dynamics and Family atmosphere 146

Introduction	146
How to Attain This Atmosphere	147
Things to Do	147
Things to Avoid	147

6. Essential Spousal Obligations159

Introduction	159
Essential Shared Obligations	160
Help Each Other be Better Muslims	160
Treat Each Other With Respect, Kindness, and Compassion	162
Fulfill Each Other's Physical Intimate Needs and Desires	164
Provide Good Companionship	167
Proper Understanding of the <i>Qawamah</i> Concept	168
Proper Understanding of the Status of Women in Islam	170
Some Essential Wife's Obligations	179
Main Caregiver of the Children	180
Obedience	181

Acceptance and Respect of the Husband's <i>Qawamah</i>	184
Some Essential Husband's Obligations	184
Main Financial Supporter of Family	185
Serving and Helping	186
Proper Use of <i>Qawamah</i> and Proper Fulfillment of <i>Qawamah's</i> Responsibility	188
7. (TAZKEIATU ANNAFS) Purifying and Cleansing	192
Introduction	192
Definition of <i>Tazkeiatu Annafs</i>	192
The <i>Qur'an</i> and <i>Tazkeiah</i>	193
The <i>Sunnah</i> and <i>Tazkeiah</i>	195
Process of <i>Tazkeiah</i>	199
Be at Peace with Yourself	205
Making Commitment " <i>Mo'ahadah</i> "	205
Watching Over Oneself " <i>Moraqabah</i> "	206
Reviewing, Assessing, and Evaluating One's Actions " <i>Mohasabah</i> "	207
Punishing Oneself for Mistakes Committed " <i>Mo'aqabah</i> "	210
Striving for the Best " <i>Mojahadah</i> "	211
Self-search	212
Sample Checklist for Husbands	213
Sample Checklist for Wives	214
Proper Islamic Conflict Resolution	215
Islamic Guidelines for Conflict Resolution	217
Take Initiative	217
Forgive and Forget	218
Control Your Anger	221
No Name-Calling	223
Practical Steps for Conflict Resolution	224
8. Common Marital Problems (Case studies)	227
1. My wife talks too much	227
2. I would love to help my husband be a grateful son to his mom, but!	228
3. The Sister-in-law Dilemma	229
4. If you don't eat it warm, you don't understand a thing!!	230

5. I feel like we are growing apart	231
6. He only thinks of his parents	233
7. My husband is rarely home	234
8. I can't enjoy a thing around him	234
9. Where did my wife go?	235
9. Anatomy of Problems (Case studies)	237
1. My wife talks too much	237
2. I would love to help my husband be a grateful son to his mom, but!	239
3. The Sister in-law Dilemma	245
4. If you don't eat it warm, you don't understand a thing!!	248
5. I feel like we are growing apart	250
6. He only thinks of his parents	254
7. My husband is rarely home	257
8. I can't enjoy a thing around him	259
9. Where did my wife go?	262
10. Family Stages: The Husband/Wife Relationship at Different Stages	265
Introduction	265
The Sweet, Critical Two	265
Forming a Family, the Stage of Having Children	268
Pregnancy and Delivery	268
Children Take Over	270
The School Years	273
The Teen Years	274
The Empty Nest: Children Leaving Home, Parents Left Alone	276
11. Further Tips	279
Arabic Terminology	285
References	290

SAAW who narrated his sayings, it means 'may Allah be pleased with him.'

1 - Family Crises in North America And Their Impact on Muslim Families

Introduction

In the preface of his book, *The Challenge of Marriage*, Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs analyzes the present situation of the American family, saying:

"Since the publication of this book, certain trends, suggested then, are now a commonplace in our contemporary scene. The conflicts and tensions that disrupt the harmony and even threaten the survival of individual marriages have increased in frequency and intensity.

However, our American family is not disintegrating despite all its shortcomings. It is true that sexual satisfaction is lacking in many marriages; and they often fail to provide the proper stimulation and guidance for children to grow and mature socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Since these are considered as two crucial functions in marriage, many begin to question the usefulness of this institution. This seems to be unwarranted.

We suggest that the family is not disintegrating, but it rather faced with a serious dilemma. It is the result of the democratic evolution with its concomitant process of equalization. Tradition has not prepared us for it.

Without knowledge and skill in coping with each other in a democratic atmosphere, our families become a battleground, torn by tension, antagonisms and hostilities. Husbands and wives find it difficult to get along peacefully. Under the impact of the ensuing warfare in which the children fully participate, their marital relationship can often be strained to the breaking point. Instead of being an element of unification, children often become an almost unsolvable disrupting influence."

He also emphasized the following: "In the past, men, in exclusive possession of political and social power, established the social conventions to their liking and benefit. The women had to conform and abide

"Women now have become the arbiters and censors, the custodian of morals and mares, imposing their rules of 'proper conduct' on men and on society as a whole. Today the wives complain that their husbands don't behave properly, in a socially accepted way. They either are too passive, aloof, and withdrawn, or too aggressive and domineering. This desire of women to be perfect, to be right, leaves neither husbands nor children to be good enough. An increasing number of boys grow up with the mistaken conviction that in order to be a real man, one has to be 'bad' or fight.

American women try so hard to be 'good'. One has to define what this goodness means. It is no longer purity, chastity, and virtue, traditionally expected and demanded from women. Women don't want necessarily to be chaste; they want to be proper. Being proper, socially correct, becomes a widely accepted idea for women.

The sexual mares for this country will greatly depend on the attitude and conventions that women will develop and establish. At the present time, they either try to impose on men the demand for fidelity and chastity, previously only required from women; or they arrogate to themselves the same license and sexual freedom that men enjoyed through out the ages.

Another trend that has become more pronounced is the emancipation of children. It is becoming increasingly obvious that adults have lost their power and authority over children, who have gained a sense of freedom and self-determination. However, while children become free to do as they decide, they often don't develop a sense of responsibility. Freedom without responsibility can be a

considerable social threat. Many parents become permissive, out of a sincere desire not to be autocratic.

Our cultural inability to live with each other as equals, is most painfully felt in our closest relationship, in marriage. The confusion and vacillation is merely the result of democratic changes, of our grouping for a new relationship, which eventually will be based on equal status for all."

A few crucial points can be deduced from the above analysis:

- The family institution in North America is faced with a serious dilemma.
- There is a continuous power struggle between the two genders to dictate the social convention of the society. Whichever gender group has the opportunity to develop and establish such conventions does so for its own benefit and liking. In the past, it was men, and now, it is women.
- Equal status for all is the answer for social stability, peace, and harmony within the family.
- The disintegration of family is having very serious effects on children's behaviors. Of course, these effects all lead in the wrong direction. To put it in Dr's Dreikurs words, these new behaviors are a "considerable social threat." This is clearly seen in popular teen culture, which is characterized, by individualism, physical indulgence, and complete lack of respect for authority, to mention just a few characteristics.

Shocking Facts

Canadian Statistics

According to the Canadian Press, the latest census numbers from Statistics Canada suggest that the 2001 Canadian census shows that the word traditional no longer describes the universal ideal for families in metropolitan areas or in Canada as a whole.

"The proportion of so-called traditional families - married couples with children - has declined in Halifax over the last five years, according to information from the 2001 census released yesterday. This mirrors the national trend.

The latest census figures show that married couples with children account for 37.6 per cent of the 100,650 families in Halifax, down from 42.3 per cent in the 1996 census. Married couples with no children in 2001 represented 33.4 per cent of total families, while in 1996 it was 31.7 per cent.

Couples in common-law relationships in Halifax make up a higher proportion of families compared to the last census. The number of common-law couples with no children was 8.2 per cent in 2001, compared to 6.8 per cent in the 1996 census. Common-law couples with children represent 4.3 per cent of all families, compared to 3.5 per cent from five years ago. A total of 16.6 per cent of Halifax families were lone-parent families.

The new census data also lists 510 same-sex families in Halifax (0.51 per cent of total families).

On a national level, the census indicates the composition of the Canadian family structure continues to diversify.

The new data shows that married couples with children account for 37.4 per cent of Canadian families, a decrease from 41.3 per cent in 1996. Married couples without children make up 33.1 per cent of the families, up from 32.4 per cent. There is an increase in the number of common-law couples, with or without children (13.8 per cent from 11.7 per cent). The number of lone-parent families accounts for 15.7 per cent while same-sex couples account for 0.41 per cent of all Canadian families.

Statistics Canada says there are several known factors behind the changing numbers: fertility rates are lower, couples are delaying having children and more just aren't having children at all. In

addition, Canadians are living longer so couples have more of their lives to spend together as empty-nesters after raising their children. And marital or common-law breakups often create two smaller households.

Nova Scotia and Quebec have the highest proportions of older people in Canada. Nova Scotia's median age rose to 38.8 years from 33.4 between 1996 and 2001.

Nova Scotia has the lowest proportion of couples with kids living at home in the country, which is linked to the older population.

The proportion of couples without children under 25 at home rose to 43 per cent in 2001 from 39 in 1996."⁵

The major newspaper of the nation's capital, The Ottawa Citizen, of October 23rd, 2002 reported the following:

"Canadians appear wedded to relationships even though the institution of marriage continues to slip in popularity, according to the latest census numbers from Statistics Canada, which, for the first time, counted same-sex couples living together.

The agency released data yesterday on Canadian families and households that show the traditional family grouping of mom, pop and the two kids had been overtaken by 2001 by an aging population and a dramatic shift in living arrangements.

Same-sex, common-law partners were only a tiny slice of the shifting scene, accounting for 0.5 per cent of all Canadian couples.

The data say households consisting of four or more people -- what we once thought of as the typical family -- had shrunk to one in four in 2001, as opposed to one in three two decades earlier.

⁵ The Canadian Press, October 23rd, 2002